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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EB-07 ISO-00 /018 W
----------023451 210909Z /21
R 210703Z JUN 77
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4687
USDOC WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, BTRA, IZ
SUBJECT: CANCELLATION OF VISIT OF PENNSYLVANIA BUSINESS GROUP TO BAGHDAD

REF: (A) DAMASCUS 3840 (NOTAL), (B) BAGHDAD 888, (C) BAGHDAD 911
(D) BAGHDAD 916, (E) BAGHDAD 973, (F) DAMASCUS 3645 (NOTAL), (G) BAGHDAD 987, (H) BAGHDAD 993, (I) DAMASCUS 3735 (NOTAL) (J) BAGHDAD 1001

1. REF. A. ADVISED USINT THAT PENNSYLVANIA BUSINESS GROUP DECIDED TO CANCEL VISIT TO BAGHDAD AFTER MEMBERS WERE STILL UNABLE TO OBTAIN VISAS FROM IRAQI EMBASSY IN DAMASCUS. USINT REGRETS OBVIOUS NEED FOR CANCELLATION AND APPRECIATES PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF GROUP MEMBERS AND ORGANIZER IN VIEW OF PROLONGED UNCERTAINTY REGARDING VISAS.

2. FOR INFORMATION OF ALL CONCERNED, USINT REQUESTED VISAS IN DIPLOMATIC NOTE TO FONMIN DATED MAY 7, 1977. WE POINTED OUT THAT GROUP WAS SCHEDULED TO DEPART U.S. ON MAY 31 AND REQUESTED FONMIN REPLY BY MAY 23. USINT COMMERCIAL OFFICERS EACH REQUESTED APPOINTMENTS WITH FONMIN, BEGINNING MAY 8, TO DISCUSS VISIT IN PERSON. THEY WERE TOLD NO PERSONAL
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CONTACT WAS NECESSARY AS MINISTRY WAS IN RECEIPT OF NOTE AND WOULD REPLY. WE BEGAN TO INQUIRE OF FONMIN AGAIN ON MAY 18 AND WERE TOLD REPLY WOULD BE FORTHCOMING. SEVERAL ADDITIONAL CALLS PRODUCED NO REPLY UNTIL DEPARTING PRINCIPAL OFFICER RAISED QUESTION OF VISAS DURING HIS FAREWELL CALL AT FONMIN ON MAY 23 (REF. B). ON MAY 29, FONMIN ADVISED THAT NO DECISION WOULD BE MADE FOR A WEEK

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(REF. C). ON JUNE 9, FONMIN ADVISED FINAL DECISION WOULD
BE FORTHCOMING ON JUNE 11 (REF. E). ANTICIPATING
ADDITIONAL DELAY, USINT ASKED AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS TO
CONTACT IRAQI CONSUL TO ALERT HIM THAT VISAS WOULD BE
REQUESTED UPON GROUP'S ARRIVAL THERE. REF. F REPORTED
DAMASCUS' AGREEMENT TO MAKE CONTACT. AS USINT'S DEADLINE
FOR CANCELLATION (JUNE 13) APPRACHED, WE CONTACTED
FONMIN AGAIN AND WERE TOLD APPROVAL WOULD BE GRANTED ON
JUNE 14 (REF. G). REF. H REPORTED GOI APPROVAL OF
VISAS, BUT IRAQI CONSUL DENIED KNOWLEDGE OF AUTHORIZATION
ON JUNE 15 (REF. I). USINT AGAIN CALLED FONMIN AND
RECEIVED ASSURANCES THAT VISAS HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED BUT
THAT AUTHORIZING CABLE DID NOT GO OUT UNTIL JUNE 15
(REF. J). GROUP WAS STILL UNABLE TO OBTAIN VISAS ON
JUNE 16, AND DECIDED TO CANCEL VISIT.

3. THE POINT OF THE ABOVE IS TO DEMONSTRATE THE
DIFFICULTY USINT FACES IN OBTAINING VISAS FOR BUSINESS-
MEN WISHING TO VISIT IRAQ. IT EMPHASIZES THE NECESSITY
TO BALANCE THE RESOURCES EXPENDED AGAINST THE POTENTIAL
BENEFIT, TO BOTH THE PROMOTION OF THE UNITED STATES EXPORTS
AND THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ. IN THIS CASE, THE
RESOURCES OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, THE DEPARTMENT
OF COMMERCE,AND AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS WERE ALSO COMMITTED
TO NO AVAIL. USINT WISHES TO EXPRESS ITS APPRECIATION
TO ALL CONCERNED. WE SUGGEST THAT, IN THE FUTURE, IF
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VISAS ARE NOT GRANTED SUFFICIENTLY FAR IN ADVANCE, A
VISIT SHOULD BE CANCELLED AND THE RESOURCES EXPENDED
ELSEWHERE.

4. USINT WILL FORWARD CHECK FOR ACCOMODATION EXPENSES
TO MISSION DIRECTOR TOM ROGERS AS SOON AS DINARS CAN BE
RECONVERTED TO DOLLARS. WE WILL DEDUCT 110 DOLLARS
FOR FORFEITED ROOM DEPOSITS AT HOTEL AND WILL RETURN
BALANCE TO HIM.

5. DECONTROL UPON RECEIPT.
MACK

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 21-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
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